

JAYANTHI PROMISES ₹1CR TO IFGTB

# 15L Casuarina Seedlings for Thane-hit Ryots

Express News Service

**Coimbatore:** With the country already having 23 percent green cover, the target of 33 percent green cover by 2014 is not a far-fetched dream, said Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests, while inaugurating the 4th Tree Growers' Mela held at the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB) here on Thursday.

In the context of the havoc caused by Cyclone Thane, ₹1 crore would be allocated to the institute to supply 15 lakh improved casuarina seedlings free of cost to the affected farmers. IFGTB, she pointed out, has been undertaking genetic improvement research and has released seed orchard-produced seeds



**Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests Jayanthi Natarajan interacting with the trainees at IFGTB, in Coimbatore on Thursday | Express**

and tested clones leading to 13% to 28% increased wood production. "The need to replant large areas with casuarina is also an opportunity

to deploy fast-growing varieties capable of delivering more income to farmers compensating the losses caused by cyclone at least

partially," she said.

Lauding IFGTB for establishing good linkages with farmers, she said, "IFGTB has provided solutions for successful tree cultivation under various systems and ensured continuous interactions between researchers and tree growers."

A Forest Genetic Resources Network (FGRMN) has been established at IFGTB to coordinate efforts to conserve them. The FGRMN will be strengthened to become a National Bureau for forest genetic resources in the country. IFGTB is a nodal institution involved in preparing a state of forest genetic resource report for India. The report will be included in the first State of World Forestry Genetic Resource report, to be brought out by FAO in March 2013.

Forest genetic resources, she added, are gaining importance in view of their socio-economic significance. They provide livelihood security by contributing to farmers and to forest-based industries.

Thanks to recent initiatives, the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) has been working very closely with all stakeholders for conservation and management of forests and promotion of tree cultivation, she said.

She said the Second Indian Forest Congress is proposed to be held at Institute of Wood Science and Technology, Bangalore. The first congress was held in New Delhi in November 2011. Findings at such forestry events will ensure large-scale tree cultivation outside forests, she added.